

Message Text

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15

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 IO-12 EA-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12 AID-20 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00

OMB-01 RSR-01 /159 W

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R 311135 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1671

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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KUWAIT POUCH ABU DHABI AND MUSCAT

DEPARTMENT PASS BAGHDAD

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IR, TC, KU, IZ

SUBJECT: IRANIAN SENATE VICE- PRESIDENT MASSOUDI ADVOCATES
COORDINATED REGIONAL PERSIAN GULF POLICY

SUMMARY: IRANIAN SENATOR MASSOUDI, FOLLOWING HIS RECENT VISIT
TO THE PERSIAN GULF, EMPHASIZED IRAN' S FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH
THE GULF STATES AND THE NEED FOR A COORDINATED REGIONAL POLICY.
END SUMMARY

1. SENATOR ABBAS MASSOUDI VICE- PRESIDENT OF THE IRANIAN SENATE
IN A PRESS INTERVIEW FOLLOWING AN EXTENSIVE RECENT TOUR
OF THE PERSIAN GULF, STRESSED THE NEED FOR A COORDINATED REGIONAL
POLICY TO MAINTAIN STABILITY " IN AN AREA LIKELY TO BECOME THE
SUBJECT OF INTENSE RIVALRY AMONG FOREIGN INFLUENCES."
MASSOUDI REPORTED DEEP INTEREST IN THE GULF STATES IN THE ADOPTION
OF A COMMON POLICY AND SAID STATES WERE WAITING FOR A LEAD FROM
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IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA. DECLARING THAT IRAN' S RELATIONS WITH GULF COUNTRIES COULD NOT BE BETTER IN TERMS OF GOOD WILL, MASSOUDI SAW THE COOPERATION OF ONE OR BOTH OF THE LARGEST REGIONAL COUNTRIES -- IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA -- AS VITAL FOR FORMING A POWER BASE STRONG ENOUGH TO RESIST A POSSIBLE COMMON ENEMY.

2. MASSOUDI RECOGNIZES ARAB NATIONALISM AS A DETERRENT TO GULF COUNTRIES ENTERING INTO LARGE SCALE DIRECT PARTICIPATION WITH IRAN IN SAFEGUARDING REGIONAL INTERESTS. HE BELIEVED, HOWEVER, THAT THIS RELUCTANCE WOULD BE OVERCOME IF A LEAD IS PROVIDED BY SAUDI ARABIA AND KUWAIT. ALTHOUGH IRAN ALONE WAS CAPABLE OF SAFEGUARDING THE REGION' S INTEREST, MASSOUDI STATED, IRAN' S POLICY WAS NOT ONE OF IMPOSING ITSELF ON OTHERS, BUT RATHER GAINING ITS OBJECTIVES THROUGH GENERAL COOPERATION.

3. THE SENATOR DREW A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE ROLE OF KUWAIT AND THAT OF SAUDI ARABIA. HE SAW THE SUSCEPTIBILITY OF KUWAIT TO IRAQI INTERESTS AS LIKELY TO PREVENT WHOLEHEARTED KUWAITI COOPERATION WITH IRAN, " WHICH WILL ULTIMATELY ASSUME REGIONAL LEADERSHIP. MASSOUDI COMMENTED THAT DESPITE IRAQ' S ANTI- IRANIAN PROPAGANDA, PEOPLE IN PERSIAN GULF RESPECTED IRAN AND HAD BECOME CONVINCED THAT IRAN HAS NO DESIGNS AGAINST THEM. MANY PERSIAN GULF STATES HAD COME TO LOOK TO IRAN TO PROTECT THE SECURITY OF THE AREA AND " IT WAS NOW UP TO IRAN TO REPLY POSITIVELY TO REGIONAL NEEDS."

4. NOTING THAT GULF MARKETS WERE WIDE OPEN TO INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND THAT THERE WAS THE IMMENSE STORE OF GOOD WILL FOR IRAN AND ITS GOOD, MASSOUDI SAID IT WAS STILL ESSENTIAL THAT GREATER ATTENTION BE PAID TO THE QUALITY OF IRAN' S GOODS.

5. THE SENATOR OBSERVED THAT QATAR AND BAHRAIN ARE POLITICALLY MORE STABLE THAN THE UNION OF ARAB EMIRATES WHICH, ALTHOUGH SEEMINGLY UNITED, SUFFER FROM INTERNAL RIVALRIES. HE SAID THAT THE RIVALRIES OF FOREIGN POWERS IN THE GULF REGION WERE THE RESULT OF OPEN AND SECRET ACTIVITIES BY THEM. HE THOUGHT THAT THE US HAS MAINTAINED ITS INFLUENCE IN THE GULF OUT OF FEAR THAT THE REGION WOULD BE OTHERWISE OPEN TO SOVIET AND CHINESE DEALINGS. THE SOVIET' S HAD OBVIOUS INFLUENCE IN IRAQ AND THE CHINESE HAD GAINED A FOOTHOLD BY AIDING THE DHOFARI REBELS.

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6. EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER THE INCREASING RIVALRY OF THE BIG POWERS, MASSOUDI SAID THE GULF STATES FEARED COMMUNISM. IT PERHAPS FOR THIS REASON THAT NONE HAD YET ESTABLISHED DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH MOSCOW OR PEKING. HE HELD THAT THE POSITION OF THE SOVIET UNION IN THE GULF AREA HAD BEEN WEAKENED

BECAUSE OF ITS ASSOCIATION WITH IRAQ, " WHICH HAD BEEN TERRORIZING THE REGIONAL STATES". THERE WAS EVIDENCE TO SHOW THAT IRAQI EMISSARIES TO THE PERSIAN GULF HAD USED THEIR TREATY WITH THE USSR TO THREATEN AND BLACKMAIL THE REGIONAL STATES; THUS FRIENDLY SOVIET OVERTURES HAD NOT PRODUCED THE DESIRED RESULTS.

COMMENT: SENATOR MASSOUDI HAS BEFORE WRITTEN A NUMBER OF ITEMS ON THE PERSIAN GULF AND HE IS GENERALLY CONSIDERED TO BE ONE OF IRAN' S MOST KNOWLEDGEABLE PERSONS ON THIS SUBJECT. HE

ECHOES A GOI THEME IN SAYING," IT UP TO IRAN TO REPLY POSITIVELY TO REGIONAL NEEDS"

HELMS

NOTE BY OC/ T: NOT PASSED BAGHDAD.

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